

PUTTING IT TO YOU

OFFICIAL MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER OF THE RPAGC

ISSUE 5

8th May, 2009

Well, here we are into May already, over one third of the year completed, and our biggest annual event of the year, the magnificent Mad Hatter Festival, a thing of the past.

But what a Mad Hatter it was. Its been a long time since we were able to pack our golf course like we did this year and keep the bar and restaurant areas so full, generating a great party atmosphere and tons of fellowship. Altogether 419 players participated and 1 148 rounds of golf were played over the 6 days. We had visitors from all over the RSA and one who came all the way from the UK. My hat goes off to the 1820s' organising committee, under the able chairmanship of our Vice Captain Cecil Jones-Phillipson, and to all the volunteers who made the effort to man the starting blocks, check score cards, marshal the field to keep it moving etc., all helping to make the "Hatter" the success that it was. In particular, the hard work and long, long hours put in by Sally Greasley, who's first class efficiency and organisation were appreciated by all. Also let us not forget Devon Brittle for all his input and hard work in helping the process along.

The ladies in the kitchen also played their part by keeping a never ending supply of snacks at the half-way house and delicious meals in the evening. The barmen (great to see Headman again) were also fantastic, never having been put under such pressure before, yet ensuring a supply of beverages to the thirsty. Unconfirmed reports say that the bar turned over in excess of R93 000 during the week.

This, the 5th issue of the Putting it to You, has plenty of information as to what is happening at the club so read on and enjoy.

CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS

Colin Howard reports: We were all saddened by the passing of Stuart Dunbar on Wednesday 22 April after a long illness. He was 58. Stu was a superb sportsman and competitor, always giving it his all. He played league for the club for many years and was the club champion in both 1994 and 1995. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word and one of the nicest people one could ever wish to meet. We shall miss him. Our condolences go to his wife Vanessa, daughter Lauren and sons Logan and Jamie.

Towards the end of last year and earlier this year, the tournaments committee conducted an exercise recording the scores per hole for over 1000 rounds of golf played by our gentlemen members . The ladies performed a similar exercise for in excess of 500 rounds. These scores were then tallied and the official formula of the SAGA applied in order to check "strokes per hole", particularly with the controversial 13th in mind. The range of results were reasonably consistent, with a few out-lyers. As we were coming to the end of our present batch of scorecards, we decided to make stroke adjustments now, before ordering the new batch. The 13th will become stroke 7, the 14th stroke 11 and the 18th stroke 17. We have also, after consultation with our sponsors GBS, put a photograph of the new clubhouse on the front of the card. The ladies' section, after their exercise, also requested that their strokes be the same as the men's (now even strokes front nine, odd strokes back) and we have agreed to this. New cards are currently being printed and these changes will become effective once the cards have arrived and are in use. A table comparing the present situation to the new one has been included later on in this newsletter for your information.

I believe we had a wonderfully successful Mad Hatter tournament this year, even the weather coming to the party and playing ball. Our thanks go to all those involved who worked so hard to ensure an enjoyable week. Some of the individual scores recorded were unbelievable – in some

instances, a 5 handicap would have to shoot between 65 and 67 gross to match them. It seems a little imbalanced there somewhere! The entertainment provided by *Centrestage* with *Gino Fabri and the girls* was superb and I hope you were all able to make one at least one of the nights they entertained us and witness their fantastic performances.

SAGA's new handicapping system introduced on April 1st has caused confusion and controversy. An explanation as to what should be recorded on your score card and entered into the NGN computer is found later in this newsletter.

OBITUARY: STUART DUNBAR

Royal Port Alfred has just enjoyed one of the best weeks of the year with the staging of its annual Mad Hatter tournament; a week when the club was full of happy visitors and members enjoying the golf in good weather and good fellowship.

But for many of our members it was also a very sad time as we coped with the death of one of our most respected members, Stuart Dunbar.

Stu was schooled in Bulawayo, Rhodesia and apart from his talent on the golf course and squash court, he also played rugby at flyhalf and fullback for Rhodesia. A renowned Springbok rugby coach was once asked who had been the best player that he had ever coached and his reply was, "You've probably never heard of him, but his name is Stuart Dunbar".

Stu, Kenton's popular and well-loved pharmacist, joined our golf club in January 1986 and deservedly won our championships on 3 occasions, 1991, 1994 and 1995, and a card of his is still displayed on the notice board posting a score of 65 he made a couple of years back.

Stu was extremely competitive and his length off the tee and touch around the greens in most cases intimidated his opponents. He was, however, the ultimate sportsman who was gracious in defeat and humble when winning.

Stu was an incredibly gifted squash player and played for Eastern Province "A" before moving to Kenton where he reigned supreme in the Albany squash league for the 20 years that he competed. Yes, Stu will be remembered by many for his achievements on the sports fields, but to his close friends he will always be remembered and admired for being a true gentleman, a man who respected all those with whom he had contact and a man who would go the extra mile to assist those who needed him. Stuart was the man that every father would want as a son-in-law.

Stu leaves behind his wife Vanessa, daughter Lauren, and sons Jamie and Logan, as well as his mother and father. As difficult as it is to bury a husband and father, we also reflect on how difficult it must be to bury a son.

Stuart, sadly we say goodbye, but we will always remember and respect you as a true champion.

NEW SAGU HANDICAP SYSTEM

As you probably know, on 1st April a new handicapping system was introduced by the SAGU officials. All members need to be aware of the complexities of this system so that when they enter their scores into the National Golf Network (NGN), they are in keeping with these new requirements.

The complications in the new system arise out of the use of "**Handicap**" (for individual competitions) and "**Allowance**" for Alliances and Better Ball competitions.

To define the terminology:

- **Handicap** refers to the handicap calculated from the 10 best scores of the last 20 entered into the NGN computer.

- **Allowance** refers to 75% of *Handicap* rounded off to the closest whole number and should be used in all Alliance and Better - Ball competitions.

For all **Individual competitions** (Medal, Stableford, Bonus Bogey etc) there is a requirement that shots can only be taken on the holes where the stroke allows it. For instance, for a handicap of 10,

one can record a maximum of 2 shots over from holes stroked 1 to 10, but only 1 over for holes stroked 11 to 18. A h/cap of 21 can record a maximum of 2 strokes over on holes stroked 4 to 18, but up to 3 strokes overs on holes stroked 1 to 3. The gross score to be entered into the NGN computer is the sum of the shots of holes 1 to 18 according to this system. The nett score is the difference between the gross score and the full handicap.

The complication arises when dealing with Better-Ball and Alliance formats, as the requirement is now based on the *Allowance* and *not* the handicap number. For instance, for a handicap of 10, the Allowance is 8 (75% of 10 to the closest whole number). Now one can record a maximum of 2 strokes over on holes stroked 1 to 8, but only 1 stroke over on holes stroked 9 to 18. A h/cap of 21 has an allowance of 16. A maximum of 2 strokes over can be recorded for holes stroked 1 to 16, but only 1 stroke over for strokes 17 and 18. The gross score to be entered into the NGN computer is the sum of the shots of holes 1 to 18 according to this system based on *Allowance and not Handicap*. Nevertheless, the nett score remains the difference between this gross score *and the full handicap*.

The new system is being criticised at large as one's actual total strokes are recorded differently for the gross score entered into the NGN in *Individual* competitions on the one hand, and *Alliance / Better-Ball* competitions on the other. Nevertheless, this is what had been adopted by those affiliated to the SAGA, which includes all members of the RPAGC.

NEW RPAGC STROKING FORMAT

The new committee has instituted a new format for the strokes per hole more commensurate with the difficulty presented. Further, the stroke for each individual hole is now the same for both ladies and gents. The new strokes are listed below for your convenience.

HOLE NO.	PAR	EXISTING GENT'S STROKE	EXISTING LADIES' STROKE	NEW STROKE LADIES' & GENT'S
1	4	10	9	10
2	4	4	5	4
3	4	14	13	14
4	4	16	15	16
5	4	2	3	2
6	3	12	11	12
7	5	6	1	6
8	3	18	18	18
9	5	8	7	8
10	4	3	10	3
11	3	15	16	15
12	4	9	6	9
13	3	17	17	7
14	5	7	14	11
15	4	13	12	13
16	4	1	2	1
17	4	5	8	5
18	5	11	4	17

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Need new grips on your clubs? Neville Henley has a range of grips and will fit them for you at a small price. You can leave your clubs at the Pro shop for him to action. If you require major club repair you can also contact the Pro shop.

All the caddies have now been photographed, finger-printed and been given I D cards. Bibs have also been issued, but these are in poor repair and we are looking to get sponsorship for new ones. The total system to be adopted has still to be finalised and implemented, but we are well underway to “getting there”.

We are also in the process of negotiating sponsorship to improve the appearance of the tee markers and this should be done in the near future.

Sally Greasley, who has been holding the management fort at the club since our previous manager left, is leaving her job later this month. During this period, Sal has been indispensable in helping to run the affairs of the RPAGC. She is taking a well earned holiday (who on earth deserves it more than Sally?) and the committee is currently looking for a roll for her to play in the club upon her return.

Interviews have been completed for the appointment of a Pro shop assistant, and the successful candidate will be announced shortly.

A new wine list has been introduced. Kevin would welcome feedback as to its contents and suggestions for expansion within reasonable limits.

Although temporarily relaxed during the Mad Hatter, the club's dress code will remain as is for the time being. It's requirements will be reinforced by putting in place more adequate signage. In particular, all members, both male and female, should be aware that shorts are not permitted in the bar area after 6.00 pm, regardless of whether there is prize-giving or not.

Fees are due at the end of June and invoices will be sent out at the end of May. A simpler fee structure system has been implemented for the benefit of members.

The future strategy of the Pro shop will be to limit hardware (bags, clubs etc.) to RPAGC branded material. General hardware will no longer be stocked. Consumable items (balls, gloves, tee pegs etc.) will continue to be held.

COURSE AND GREEN MATTERS

Cecil Jones-Phillipson reports: Very little rain has fallen since the last issue of the *Putting it to You* but I am happy to report that the course stood up well to the more than 1 000 rounds of golf played during the Mad Hatter Week. Many players commented favourably on the condition of the course. There are still the odd bare patches on the 14th, 16th and 18th and preferred placing at one club length will continue to be allowed till further notice.

The 9th tee-box has responded particularly well to its re-shaping and is now back in play. The Ladies' and Seniors' are very happy with the now leveled and wider tee. The grass steps leading up to the top 12th tee box have made a significant improvement to the access there. The view from this tee is also quite stunning. The 14th green continues to present problems and we will have to bear with it until Spring and then decide the way forward. Golfers canvassed seem favourably impressed with the clearing under the trees. We have not been able to cut back on the mowing of the fairways during the growing season, which will now come to an end with the cooler weather setting in. From mid-May until Spring we should be able to reduce fuel costs. Aloes have been planted at the 200m mark on the 5 pars and at 100m to the green on pars 4 and 5 to assist players with club and shot choice.

The gardener who is clearing the bush and creeper from the boundary fence is doing a fantastic job under very difficult conditions. More than half of the clearing has already been completed.

WILDLIFE MATTERS

Geoff Broom is not around town at present, but it would appear that our wildlife on the course is in very good condition. The sex-starved seven springbok ewes have been making up for lost time with the two new rams and the smiles on their faces indicate that we should be expecting seven new lambs in October / November.

There were no Bushbuck rams up for sale at the last auction, but we hope to purchase one at the Kirkwood Game Sale on 2nd June.

We have yet to get a response from Nature Conservation regarding our application for a "Certificate of Adequate Enclosure", but when they do make their inspection we envisage no problem.

MAD HATTER: 2009

Chairman of the 2009 Mad Hatter's Organising Committee, Vice captain Cecil Jones-Phillipson reports: Many 'Mad Hatters' who have played in all or most of the 13 previous events, remarked that this one was the best ever. I would like to thank all the 1820s, Kevin and his staff, Tim Ridden and the Course team. The course was in excellent shape and I appreciate what you all achieved under difficult circumstances.

I'd like to applaud Colin Reed and Sally Greasely, not only for the last fortnight's hard work, but the many preceding months of efficient preparation.

Centrestage proved to be the best entertainment we have ever been able to enjoy at a Mad Hatters Festival. Well done, Ross Purdon for organising this.

Also, well done to Bella, Gill and all the catering staff for providing delicious meals all day and every day. Its too early to comment on the financial results of this year's effort, but we anticipate that the 14th Mad Hatter Week has been a great success.

LEAGUE FIXTURES AND RESULTS

The latest league fixtures took place on Sunday, 26th April. The results were:

"A" Team:	Beat PE Golf Club	12 – 6
(1 st league).	Drew with Walmer	9 – 9
"B" Team:	Beat PE Golf Club	18 – 0
(3 rd league).	Beat Walmer	18 – 0

A good day for the 1st team and overwhelming wins for the 2nd team to maintain their position on top of the 3rd league.

LADIES SECTION

Captain Dee Jones-Phillipson reports: As a result of the water logged RPAGC on 2nd March, the Ladies D and A Timbers Open was rescheduled to 5th April which happily turned out to be a stunning day. We had 58 players in the field. The day was most successful and greatly enjoyed by visitors and members alike. The table was laden with superb prizes donated by D and A Timbers, our main sponsor, and the many other sponsors who kindly supported our Open.

Rain washed out the Centenary Trophies Better Ball Competitions for gents and ladies (separate, but to be held concurrently) originally scheduled for 15th February to be played. The ladies event was finally played on 14th April in conjunction with the monthly BB competition. It turned out to be very lucrative afternoon for some lucky ladies as the Rosehill Super Spar were the sponsors for both the competitions!

The EP Senior Ladies played their monthly competition at the RPAGC on 16th April and invited

local ladies of 50 years and more to join them. The afternoon was enjoyed by a field of 48 which included 22 of our members.

The 14th Mad Hatter Week proved most successful. I'd like to express my sincere thanks to all the ladies who assisted in selling the Mad Hatter raffle tickets every morning in the Registration office and also to those who helped raise funds for Hospice on the par 3 Doug Dold tee. The golfers were most generous and Zelda Elliott, the lady in charge of fund raising for Sunshine Coast Hospice is most appreciative and very grateful. R3 214 was raised for this worthy cause.

Competitions in May:

5th - Pick 'n Pay Medal and Putting

11th - Monday League at the Port Elizabeth Golf Club

12th - Homewoods Individual Stableford

19th - Homewoods Bisque Bogey

23rd - A Saturday, we travel to Grahamstown and support the Grahamstown Ladies Open in a BB competition

25th and 26th - Club Championships sponsored by Rosehill Super Spar. 18 holes each afternoon.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF GOLF

A man was teeing off from the men's tee. On his downswing, he realized that his wife was teeing up on the woman's tee directly in front of him.

Unable to stop his swing, he nailed it, and hit her directly on the head, killing her instantly. A few days later, he received a call from the coroner regarding her autopsy.

Coroner: "Your wife seemed to have died from blunt force trauma to the head. You said you hit a golf ball and hit her on the head, is that correct?"

Man: "Yes, sir, that's correct."

Coroner: "Well, inexplicably, I found a golf ball wedged up her rear."

Man: "Was it a Srixon 3?"

Coroner: "Yes, it was."

Man: "Ah, that was my provisional."

These are quite old, but still good for another look and a giggle:

- Golf can best be defined as an endless series of tragedies obscured by the occasional miracle, followed by a good bottle of beer.

- Golf! You hit down to make the ball go up. You swing left and the ball goes right. The lowest score wins. And on top of that, the winner buys the drinks.

- Golf is harder than baseball. In golf, you have to play your foul balls.

- If you find you do not mind playing golf in the rain, the snow, even during a hurricane, here's a valuable tip: your life is in trouble.

- Golfers who try to make everything perfect before taking the shot rarely make a perfect shot.

- The term "mulligan" is really a contraction of the phrase "maul it again."

- A "gimme" can best be defined as an agreement between two golfers ...neither of whom can putt very well.

- An interesting thing about golf is that no matter how badly you play; it is always possible to get worse.

- Golf's a hard game to figure. One day you'll go out and slice it and shank it, hit into all the traps and miss every green. The next day you go out and, for no reason at all, you really stink.

- If your best shots are the practice swing and the "gimme putt", you might wish to reconsider this game.

- Golf is the only sport where the most feared opponent is you.

- Golf is like marriage: If you take yourself too seriously it won't work, and both are expensive.

- The best wood in most amateurs' bags is the pencil.

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